

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

SS-15 NSC-05 /061 W
----- 095053

R 101435Z FEB 75
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0015
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT

S E C R E T USNATO 0696

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC
SUBJ: INITIAL COMMENT ON PRELIMINARY PHASE II REPORT

REF: NPG/WP(74)9, DATED 4 DECEMBER 1974

MISSION PROVIDES BELOW TEXT OF LETTER TO ACTING SYG PANSA FROM AMBASSADOR MENZIES (CANADA) CONCERNING CANADIAN COMMENTS ON PRELIMINARY PHASE II REPORT, AND TEXT OF CANADIAN COMMENTS:

BEGIN TEXT OF LETTER:

ATTACHED ARE THE VIEWS OF MY AUTHORITIES ON THE PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PHASE II OF THE FOLLOW-ON USE PROGRAMME, NPG/WP(74)9. IN COMMENTING ON THE REPORT, WHICH THEY FIND TO BE A CREDITABLE WORK, MY AUTHORITIES HAVE NATURALLY REFRAINED FROM REMARKING ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE INITIATION OF PHASE III OF THE PROGRAMME AND ON THE POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AREAS OF CURRENT NPG INTEREST ON THE BASIS THESE CONSIDERATIONS WILL NO DOUBT BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES IN THE PREPARATION OF THEIR OWN REPORT ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH

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IS TO BE FORWARDED TO MINISTERS FOR CONCURRENT CONSIDERATION.

I AM SENDING A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO OUR

COLLEAGUES IN THE NPG.
END TEXT OF LETTER.

BEGIN TEXT OF COMMENTS:

WE FIND THE REPORT TO BE A GENERALLY WELL CONSTRUCTED STUDY AND THE DISCUSSION OF FOLLOW-ON USE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF AGREED NATO STRATEGY TO BE WELL REASONED. THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PHASE I STUDIES AND THE CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN THEREFROM IS A GOOD PIECE OF WORK. ATTENTION IS RIGHTLY DRAWN TO THE LIMITATIONS OF EARLIER STUDIES, TWO OF WHICH IN OUR VIEW--THAT PHASE I STUDIES FOCUSED ON MILITARY ASPECTS WITH LITTLE SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL/MILITARY INTERACTION, AND THAT ALL STUDIES MADE THE ASSUMPTION IN THE OPENING SCENARIO THAT NATO WAS AT A SERIOUS MILITARY DISADVANTAGE--ARE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION. WE ALSO FIND THE DISCUSSION ON DETERRENCE AND THE NATURE OF POSSIBLE ENEMY RESPONSE TO BE GENERALLY WELL HANDLED.

APART FROM THE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS, WE FIND THAT THE MOST INTERESTING PART OF THE REPORT IS CONCERNED WITH THE DISCUSSION OF WIDER POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECTS OF FOLLOW-ON USE. ALTHOUGH THE REPORT GENERALLY STEERS AN ACCEPTABLE MIDDLE COURSE BETWEEN WHAT MIGHT BE TERMED THE TWO MAIN CONSIDERATIONS AT ISSUE, WE WONDER WHETHER THE OPENING SENTENCE IN PARAGRAPH 65 COULD BE READ AS IMPLYING THAT MILITARY UTILITY MIGHT IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES BE OF OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE IN FOLLOW-ON USE. IF SO, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT SUCH A FINDING IS NOT WARRANTED BY THE STUDY.

WITH REGARD TO THE ASSERTION CONTAINED IN THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH 42 TO THE EFFECT ALL FORMS OF FOLLOW-ON USE ARE SIMILAR AND THAT THE CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY THE STUDY TEAM THEREFORE HAVE A GENERAL VALIDITY, WE WONDER WHETHER THIS IS THE CASE. AS IS POINTED OUT ELSEWHERE IN THE REPORT THE STUDY TEAM EFFORT WAS CIRCUM-
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SCRIBED BY THE FACT THAT WITH ONE EXCEPTION, ALL PHASE I STUDIES PRESUPPOSED A MARKED CONVENTIONAL IMBALANCE IN WARSAW PACT FAVOUR, ESPECIALLY IN THE CASE OF THEATRE RESERVE FORCES, AND THAT THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN A SITUATION WHERE CONVENTIONAL FORCES WERE MORE NEARLY IN BALANCE WAS NOT CONSIDERED IN ANY DETAIL. WHILE WE HAVE NO PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY WITH THE STATEMENT WHEN READ IN CONTEXT, WE ARE OF THE VIEW IT MAY APPEAR OVERLY CATEGORICALY WHEN READ ALONE AND SUGGEST IT COULD PERHAPS BE REPHRASED TO ADVANTAGE.

WE WOULD ALSO QUESTION THE STATEMENT IN THE SECOND PART OF PARAGRAPH 73(F) WHICH IMPLIES THAT THE WARSAW PACT

IN THEIR RESPONSE MIGHT BE CAPABLE OF MATCHING NATO'S LOW YIELD WEAPONS. WE RECALL THAT THIS POINT CAME UP AS WELL IN THE WARSAW PACT STRATEGY STUDY AT WHICH TIME IT WAS AGREED THAT WHILE COMMAND AND CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS ON THE WARSAW PACT SIDE APPEARED ADEQUATE TO ENSURE CONTROL OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THEIR WEAPONS MIGHT BE EMPLOYED, THE QUESTION OF THE LEVEL OF THE RESPONSE WAS BEST LEFT OPEN.

TURNING TO THE CONCLUSIONS, WE NOTE THAT NO ATTEMPT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MADE IN PARAGRAPH 79 TO ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS PUT AT THE OUTSET IN PARAGRAPH 4. WHILE WE HAVE NO PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY WITH THE THREE MAIN CONCLUSIONS REACHED, WE ARE, NEVERTHELESS, CURIOUS AT THE TOTAL LACK OF REFERENCE IN THE FINDINGS TO THE OBJECTIVES PREVIOUSLY SET OUT, ESPECIALLY THAT CONTAINED IN PARAGRAPH 4(B) ON THE ENSURING OF POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE NUCLEAR ENGAGEMENT IN FOLLOW-ON USE. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE QUESTIONS MAY NOT BE READILY ANSWERABLE IN THE TERMS PUT, OR PERHAPS IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO SAY THAT TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE ANSWERABLE THE FINDINGS SHOULD MORE PROPERLY BE REACHED DURING THE FORMULATION OF GUIDELINES IN PHASE III RATHER THAN IN PHASE II, WE BELIEVE THAT AN ATTEMPT BY THE STUDY TEAM TO CLARIFY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OBJECTIVES AND FINDINGS WOULD BE USEFUL.

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IN REWORKING THE CONCLUSIONS, THE STUDY GROUP MAY ALSO SEE MERIT IN MAKING THE POINT MORE EXPLICITLY THAN IS NOW THE CASE (PERHAPS IN PARAGRAPH 79(C)) THAT THE STRENGTHENING OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES WOULD AT THE SAME TIME SERVE TO ENHANCE THE DETERRENT VALUE OF THEATRE NUCLEAR WEAPONS. WE BELIEVE THE STUDY POINTS CLEARLY TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE TACTICAL USE OF SUCH WEAPONS IN EUROPE COULD REQUIRE MORE RATHER THAN FEWER CONVENTIONAL FORCES AND THAT THE STRENGTHENING OF THE LATTER, WHILE ADDING TO THEIR OWN DETERRENT VALUE, WOULD AT THE SAME TIME SERVE TO ENHANCE THE DETERRENT VALUE OF THEATRE NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

END TEXT OF COMMENTS.BRUCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 18 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 FEB 1975
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NATO00696
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750286/abbrzicf.tel
Line Count: 152
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NPG/WP(74)9, DATED 4 DECEMBER 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <16 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INITIAL COMMENT ON PRELIMINARY PHASE II REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC
To: STATE
SECDEF INFO USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT
Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006